

Commission on the Elimination of Poverty
Full Commission Meeting – John A. Logan Community College
April 8, 2010 Meeting Minutes

1) Introductions – 3:00 – 3:10

In Room

Sid Mohn – Heartland Alliance
Judson Childs – Mayor of Cairo
Daniel Schwick – Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
Al Riddley – Illinois Coalition of Community Services
Gaye Preston – Community Support Services Inc
Dwight Lucas – East Central Illinois Community Action Agency
Brandi Johnson – Safer Foundation
Cheri Neal Detzig – Zion Township
Eithne McMenamin – Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
Marilyn Green – Department of Public Health
Terri Solomon – African-American Family Commission
Mike Jones – Department of Health and Family Services
Doug Schenkelberg – Heartland Alliance
Kim Drew – Heartland Alliance
Allison Leipziger – Heartland Alliance

On the Phone

Dr. Toni Irving – Office of the Governor
Samreen Khan – Office of the Governor
Ashley Rook – Office of the Governor
Leslie Boucree – Department of Human Rights
Lanita Kostner – State Board of Education
Others inaudible

2) Introduction to Poverty Reduction Modeling Presentation – 3:10 – 3:15

Doug: had conversations with Urban Institute over the past year linking their work w/ Commission. Tool to determine recommendations, their direct impact and poverty reduction. What Sheila and Linda have learned, what is going on in other states and how we can use it.

3) Presentation on Poverty Reduction Modeling (via video conference) – 3:15 – 3:45

- Shelia Zedlewski and Linda Giannarelli – Urban Institute

Power Point Presentation

- Talk about costs for rural vs. urban and taking those into account, using ACS and Census data – would be good improvement for model to be able to do that.

- Assumption that it costs the Elderly less money for same size household, but based on old numbers and no longer the case. Reflected in alternative measure.
 - Child poverty declining because more non-cash or near cash benefits counted in alternative measure.
 - How many states? Nation – Center on American Progress, MN and CT using CPS, Grant to adapt MN to ACS, now looking at Safety Net policies, MA, IL, and GA.
 - Question about how precise is definition of job training? Depends on the intervention, would go to the literature to see what it says about that kind of intervention and the likely affect on wages.
 - Will need to take into account new Health Care bill
 - Question: LIHEAP as source as source as cash income but not using other sources (Head Start, weatherization, CSBG). Not doing Head Start or assigning a value to that, not one of the things in the modern poverty recommendations. CSBG not doing that but it overlaps with CCDF but not the value of other kinds of services of community services block grants. If there is anything that should be included for poverty measure for IL, report back to Census.
 - Doug: Do you capture state based programs that are one time shots? Like homelessness prevention dollars – they only get it for one month but it has an impact on their income and stability. Does the model take this into account? Yes – it could be done, even if it were a single one-lump sum payment. Would have to look at value or difficulty of identifying recipients but could do it.
 - Focuses on Government based benefits – is that accurate? Yes, there are forms of compensation on jobs that we wouldn't be capturing (like employment-based child care). There are limitations to survey data and it is sometimes difficult or implausible.
 - So the interventions are generally government based interventions? Yes. And Governmental interventions are maybe less episodic, more stable, more predictable and easier to track/model
 - How do we take into consideration services that have barriers to access (like for those for formerly incarcerated)? Might not know who just returned from prison but can tell from the data the characteristics of the population in general to estimate. Can base recommendations based on characteristics of population.
- They have received outside grant funding that allows them to compare GA, IL, and MA to compare states with different kinds of safety nets (IL is middle). So that leaves Commission with funding to create model for the state. If we want to use that model for policy recommendations, that's where we have to have funding to pay them to do that (ie if we want to see how TJ works). Depends on complexity and other factors how much it is. Basically their model could validate recommendations or tell us what might need to change. Won't be able to do all but need to focus on the bigger ones with big impacts.
- Choose to simulate “do-able” recommendations
 - Might want to recommend using simulation from here on out.
 - Commission does annual reports, there are resources each year so can update model for each year.
 - Right now there is no funding to do it. Submitted to MacArthur, Community Trust, Ford Foundation for modeling

- Check that we all agree that we want to urge the state to use modeling as a way of refining anti-poverty commitments. Do we agree? Yes.
- Wait to see what we get back.
- Toni on the phone – concern we create too many layers between action and goal. Is it possible for us to zero in on particular things that could be impacted here? And then encourage the state to do things regarding that impact? Sid: We have a general goal to reduce deep poverty by 2015. So we've already made more substantive policy decision by saying "this is the target."
- How I see modeling is to synthesize and measure the effectiveness of the policies. So there is some value in that. People are always asking the impact. Can show them the impact with modeling. Do hope we can identify recommendations for specific populations. You can have people who meet the criteria but still not meet their needs.
- I think it makes sense to put out there a suggestion that we have a reasonable expectation has a certain set of outcomes and then can track them. Not set up millions of dollars and just hope it works.
- Think it will be a really good suggestion to do that but I think we should see the modeling results we get first before deciding if we want to suggest it.
- Another modifier... the word "All" - you shouldn't have to model everything. There are some things you don't need to model. Just do it when it's appropriate, but not always.
- Modeling can also help unveil things we don't think about. Some programs in Chicago that took three factors – basically about innovation. Modeling might help us see things that we wouldn't other think about.
- Good to be able to see what it is to integrate different strategies.
- Want to be able to get information Urban Institute has modeled for other states.
- Sid: Generally, we as a commission, find that modeling will be a helpful tool in a focused analysis of maximum impact on poverty reduction. Or rather, modeling has the potential to be. (Focused because of urban/rural differences)

4) Working Committee Reports

- **Living with Dignity – Dwight Lucas – 3:45 – 3:55**
 - Focused on addressing those issues of work – those who cannot and those who are not expected to work. Meeting regularly since January. Quality – looking at improving TANF and SSI and SSDI income in relationship to cash assistance. Focused on persons who have the need? Changes that can be made to improve federally funded program
 - Access – are they able to and if not what can be done? One stop for all benefits, community based access, come up with over 20 recommendations. Can go on Google doc to see them and how they relate to "doable" and how it relates to human rights. Will be looking at which recommendations will be flushed out.
 - Looking at modeling, some of those are in there. Our next meeting is May 17th. Have had great support from HA and have been meeting deadlines.
 - One stop services: what are the benefits for extreme poverty reduction? It's been about the reality of the 20% of those eligible receiving it. Where

are the gaps for access/knowledge/ etc? Are they where those people are? And are they in a format that is usable by that population? Let's fill gap of people who can get benefits they are currently eligible and then more from there.

- Access is information and location.
- Case management perspective – get what they need and they fit together. Start to eliminate conflicting messages
- Different systems put in place so when we get to a state level will be a mess. Can't put in place 7 or 8 different systems.
- There is the human dignity angle to that – a single point of entry to the system is important so they're not bounced around.
- Important to standardize information – why is a case manager in WI doing a better job than all of those in IL?
- Has to do with timing, too – things change, especially in prison system. Now having re-entry summits for the first two years out of prison.
- Everyone is trying to standardize – but not with one another. But if we did that it would be a great use of resources.
- Have to talk to DHS - no wrong door, etc. Don't want to have to say, "this is the wrong place for _____"
- **Making Work Accessible – Al Riddley – 3:55 – 4:05**
 - Our assignment was to look at others removed from workforce, we have become in engaged with offering recommendations:
 - Meeting April 19th
 - Vision statement for committee: three critical areas: education, jobs, adequate contextual community supports to food, housing etc.
 - Primary focus on TJs. Chicago Jobs Council presented a proposal for discussion focused on working age adult, income below 50% FPL and no work experience previous two years. From this TJ model is that each hub has two step process – one is 20 hour minimum wage job and then to job which would lead to career track.
 - Begin to filter through recommendations.
 - Will have to figure out how we deal with duplicative areas of work. So maybe all committees suggest X and that's okay. Yes, one stop could fit for all three areas. Hubs would be able to contextual according to geographical location across the state. That's where modeling comes into affect – rural vs. urban situation.
- **Making Work Pay – Maria Whelan – 4:05 – 4:15**
 - I agree, phone stuff is tough. Now having face to face meeting.
 - Work is clustering in education and access to high school completion, English Language acquisition
 - Child care – reduction of co pays and outreach of system
 - As of May 1st, co pays are eliminated for those at or below poverty level.
 - Employment practice and exploitation – workers who are unable due to lack of documentation unable to advocate on their behalf.
 - Increased nutrition, transportation, EITC, tax incentives
 - 30 plus recommendations

- Will meet again face to face and look through recommendations, throw stuff out. Get down to 20 or so recommendations
- Need to focus through several lenses, Urban, Rural, Suburban
- Trying to use lens of “do-ability”
- Focused on capacity to track and measure impact of steps on right direction
- Challenge: keeping ourselves focused on deep poverty.
- Challenge: being strategic about strategies.
- Give bit more about community colleges: have been primarily around comprehensive scholarships for very low income, provide last dollar the provide tuition and transportation but also tutoring, support services, mentoring. Another is signature scholarship program around academic advising. Focus on helping to make low skilled students who finish high school or have GED move to the next step. Good b/c community college more doable – not high ticket recommendations.
- Bridge programs too – education recommendations go from high school completion, community college, language acquisition, the whole spectrum.
- Labor practice: wage theft but also those that only receive 40% of their pay, etc.
- Huge amount of public awareness about what people can do. What about a campaign to ask people to not get a starbucks for a day and to tip in cash their hotel cleaning staff. Could brainstorm ways that people could give things up at little to no pain that would have huge impacts, get people out of poverty.
- Helpful for us to think of this on many levels – government, local, also looking at other things we can do as a community to support folks that are really doable and increase awareness.

5) Discussion of Next Steps – 4:15 – 5:00

- Finalizing Working Committee Recommendations
 - Review timeline
 - This is an updated version. Just as a reminder of what we have to do from this point moving forward. Anticipated the working committee would wrap up their work in April but we all know this isn’t plausible. Push into May with the goal to turn things over at the end of the month to the steering committee (beginning of May and end of June).
 - Still allows for the summer to be the time of finalization for the report. The piece that would add some other substance if there are resources for modeling poverty reduction. Depending on the complexity it can be done relatively quickly. Could do it by end of May with their model but if we have recommendations to turn over to them, they can turn them around in a month, month and a half. That may or may not impact this timeline. Final report

could be done August, mid-August. A July meeting of the commission for final approval of the document

- How are we paying attention to the work of the human service commission? We have a bunch of working groups that are wrapping up next week. They include significant overlap with poverty. Public Assistance working group, Food and housing, Employment working group. These look more closely at work agencies are doing as well as community based providers – see where the efficiencies can be. Two year reporting. But different drafts along the way. In the middle of first draft right now – will send it out in May. Our report might be distributed to Human Service Commission? They ought to be complimentary, there is significant overlap. Almost at final draft to sit down with steering committee of Human Service Committee and our steering committee to work with one another.
- Change: make that July meeting as a close to final draft for committee reviews and then another meeting a month later where we actually vote.
- Applying the human rights framework
 - A lot of recommendations are the ideal. And so their alignment with the human rights frame is good because they haven't been through the political process yet. As we move forward, utilize an analytical tool to make sure the recommendations line up with human rights framework. Will distribute this worksheet to committees they can use to analyze recommendations. Folks can expect to receive this worksheet soon.
- Use of poverty reduction model testing
- Tour:
 - From 9 to Noon
 - Leave from Holiday Inn at 9am

Next time meeting “Down South,” include to Cairo please.

Adjourned at 5:01pm